



Life Group Discussion Guide
Sunday, September 17, 2017
“To Judge, or Not to Judge?”

Open in prayer

Sermon Summary

Pastor Loren continued our series in the Sermon on the Mount with Matthew 7:1-6. This portion of scripture is widely popular even among people who are not very familiar with the Bible.

“Judge not” is one of the most popular verses in our culture because it seems to fit in with two of our culture’s most basic assumptions: that a) religion is private and b) morality is relative, which means you can’t really tell anybody what they believe is wrong.

Some people use this verse like a deflative weapon whenever people try to tell them something is wrong. A popular belief in our present society is that intolerance is unacceptable. In other words, you must accept me and approve of me. If you disagree and confront me, you are judging me. That is not acceptable. But is this really what Jesus means in Matthew 7?

- How do intolerance and disagreement differ?

Read Matthew 7:1-6

The Big Idea: “Who are you to judge me?” The idea of someone passing judgement on us is uncomfortable and offensive. Jesus cautions us against being self-righteous, critical, and judgmental, yet we are called to help one another grow spiritually. There are times to lovingly point out the sins of another in an attempt to help find restoration to God.

- What does Jesus mean by judging?
- Can we disagree with others or speak out against something as wrong?
- How are condemnation and correction different?
- What prompts us to judge others?

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1. There is only one true judge.

Remember this truth: We are not anyone’s judge. There is only one true judge.

“There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?” (James 4:12)

2. As believers, we are not to be judgmental - Romans 3:10

When we **confront the sins of someone and then dismiss them as a person**, we are guilty of judging in the way Jesus forbids.

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (John 3:17)

Pastor Loren said: *Not condemning does not mean not telling the truth. It’s what you do after you tell someone the truth that determines whether you are condemning them.*

- How can speak truthfully about things without being condemning?
- Recall some examples of when Jesus addressed sin but also showed love?

How can we know if we are being judgmental? Here are some signs:

- We are more enraged at someone else’s sin than we are humbled by our own.
- We “cut off” people who disagree with us
- We write people off as hopeless
- We fail to forgive
- We gossip (did you hear about...can you believe that?)

3. Jesus is not prohibiting us making moral judgements

Here’s what’s interesting... In verse 1 Jesus says “judge not”, but in verse John 7:24 he says, “**Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.**”



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“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.” (Matthew 18:15)

How do we do this? How do we live this out as a church? (Slide) With God’s Word as our guide, the Holy Spirit as our teacher, and the love of Jesus as our motivation, we discern, we evaluate, and we measure in order to help ourselves and others follow Jesus more closely.

4. We must focus on our own sin, before helping others.

“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

5. Confronting the sins of others requires gentleness and compassion

Two reasons:

- We cannot help anyone else until we have first received help from the Lord.
- Second, we have no credibility until we have addressed our own sins.

“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)

Thoughts on how to apply these verse to our lives:

- We must first search our own hearts concerning sin and godliness.
- Our motivation in confronting others really, really matters. - Why is it that we are confronting? What is our goal?
- **Trust the pace of God in someone else’s life.**
- Seek to first lead someone to faith in Christ, before persuading them to your point of view.
- Sincere prayer is powerful and effective.